Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Rural Drinking Water component of the Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY). Powers have been delegated to the States to plan, sanction and implement individual rural drinking water supply schemes. In March, 2001, Government of Maharashtra was informed that as no additional funds under ARWSP are available it would not be possible to release any additional funds during 2000-2001. During 2000-2001, Rs. 169.34 crore under ARWSP and Rs. 24.14 crore under the Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY were released to Maharashtra.

(d) In 2001-2002 Maharashtra Government has been allocated Rs. 191.59 crore under ARWSP, and under the Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY Rs. 31.05 crore have been allocated. As first instalment Rs. 95.79 crore under ARWSP and Rs. 5.55 crore under Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY have been released for the current year.

CAPART assistance to rural artisans of Tamil Nadu

3297. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any plan of assistance has been implemented by "CAPART" for providing financial and training assistance to rural artisans of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the number of districts in the State where such artisans have been benefited so far during the last five years under these schemes;

(c) what is the total amount of assistance given so far; and

(d) what are the criteria for selection of such artisans under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) CAPART has funded some voluntary organisations to take up projects under the schemes, viz., Development of Women & Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and Public Cooperation (PC) which involved skill orientation as well as skill upgradation of women and men already engaged in trades like weaving, bamboo and cane work, mat weaving, carpentry, gem-cutting etc.

(b) 230 artisans in five districts of Tamil Nadu have so far been benefited during the last five years under these schemes.

(c) And amount of Rs. 10.66 lakhs has been extended to the voluntary organisations for this purpose so far.

(d) Only the poor rural artisans are provided support.

Acute shortage of drinking water in Himachal Pradesh

3298. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether acute shortage of safe drinking water in Himachal Pradesh has been reported to Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the situation has become worse in Himachal Pradesh after sever drought like situation developed in the absence of sufficient rain-falls and snow-fall during last winter season;

(d) whether Government were requested to provide special Central assistance to Himachal Pradesh to enable the State Government to undertake various projects to augment drinking water supply in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) As reported by the Government of Himachal Pradesh, due to insufficient snowfall during the last two winters and scanty winter rains, there has been considerable reduction in the discharge of various water sources which are otherwise perennial in nature. The State experienced less than normal rainfall during the period between 1-1-2001 to 28-2-2001 and this situation has led to drought like condition in the State.

(d) The State Government has submitted a Memorandum to the Government of India requesting for an emergent relief of Rs. 90.25 crore including Rs. 32.40 crore for drinking water supply relief measures.

(e) The primary responsibility for dealing with natural calamity including drought rests with the State Government. The main source of financing relief expenditure is the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for which 75% share is contributed by the Central Government. For major calamities, where funds in the CRF do not suffice, assistance is admissible from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). These arrangements are in accordance with the award of the Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC). Apart from releasing the entire Central share of CRF